

SCIENCE & EDUCATION Impact

Benefits from USDA/Land-Grant Partnership

Local Problem Solvers

A national resource with a local face

The problems and opportunities that matter most are those that strike close to home. How does this affect me? My family? My business? My farm? My community? With its network of extension specialists in nearly every county linked to regional and national expertise at colleges and universities, the Land-Grant university system is uniquely qualified and positioned to help citizens overcome problems and make the most of opportunities.

Payoff

- **Crop shift, profit boost.** A **North Carolina A&T** Extension specialist worked with 12 small-scale producers to shift from tobacco production to producing certified organic vegetables, generating more than \$90,000 in added revenues.
- **Savings from space.** More than \$7 million in testing fees were saved when **Penn State** used satellite-based remote sensing systems to identify wells that could be excluded from testing by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection because they were located in areas where contamination was unlikely.
- **Precise planters.** Sugarbeet growers in the Red River Valley of **North Dakota** and **Minnesota** improved yields by an estimated one-ton-per-acre through improved planter performance after participating in a **North Dakota State** planter testing clinic. It's estimated that the program has improved sugarbeet revenue in the region by about \$7 million annually.
- **Home sweet business.** Eighty percent of businesses that involved **Oklahoma State** Extension programs to help entrepreneurs start their own businesses are still in business after four years. The national average is only 60 percent.

**RESEARCH,
EXTENSION AND
EDUCATION
AT WORK**

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- **Plant masters.** In Extension's Master Gardener program, volunteers receive training in return for providing volunteer service. Master Gardeners in one **Georgia** community are teaching basic plant care skills to physically and mentally challenged adults so they can obtain jobs in the horticulture industry. Master Gardener programs are offered in **Montana, North Dakota, Vermont, Tennessee** and most other states. Master Gardener volunteers in **Utah** picked about 2,000 pounds of cherries and donated them to food banks.
- **Bounce free.** In one **Indiana** county, **Purdue** specialists taught financial management skills to bad-check-writing offenders. Of the 70 individuals who took the course last year, not one has come back through the court system for bad check-writing offenses.
- **Schooled in efficiency.** In the first year of a **Louisiana State** Extension energy management program for school districts, participating schools saved an average of 12 percent for a total of more than \$3.5 million.
- **Boosting business.** With guidance from **Mississippi State** Extension, a catfish producer built and expanded a catfish processing facility. Today the plant employs 100 people and processes 75,000 pounds per day. Another expansion is under way. A **Nebraska** Extension program that supports entrepreneurs in rural communities created 450 full-time jobs since 1993. In **Tennessee**, a manufacturer of gourmet jellies and dressings relied on extension expertise to increase gross sales from \$600 per month to \$56,000 per month over two years. **California Extension** helped develop a cooperative to market and process wild rice. Today the cooperative employs 12 people and has an annual value of more than a million dollars.
- **A fruitier Texas.** Research at **Texas A&M** on production techniques, environmental impacts, cultivar selection and other key topics has helped the state's nursery and greenhouse production industry double its value since 1988 to more than \$800 million.
- **Safer farms.** A **Missouri** Extension program trains adults to teach agricultural safety to kids. The program boosted knowledge of safe behaviors by 31 percent among elementary school children. **Ohio State** researchers identified new material for slow-moving vehicle signs that make farm equipment visible at twice the current distance. They also devised new lighting and marking systems that clearly define the width of equipment for approaching drivers. The Ohio standards have now been accepted nationwide.
- **Making super supers.** A **Cornell** program is targeting New York City landlords who receive their first building code violation. The program improves landlord-tenant communications and promotes more responsible ownership. Of the more than 100 landlords who attended during the first year of the program, none has incurred additional violations. The program is being adopted in **Oregon, Mississippi, California, Massachusetts** and **Colorado**.
- **Connecting the hinterlands.** Rugged Ferry County in **Washington** went from among the lowest to highest per capita usage of the Internet in the state, thanks to **Washington State** Extension. **North Dakota State** also provides Internet training in areas where it's usually unavailable. In exchange, participants volunteer at least 30 hours, teaching Internet classes, staffing public access Internet computers, and working with youth, seniors or special interest groups.



**Cooperative State Research, Education,
and Extension Service**
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